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BULLETIN OF THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS

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EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED
WITH ANNOTATIONS

- * Asterisks denote books of special distinction.
- R Recommended.
- Ad Additional book of acceptable quality for collections needing more material in the area.
- M Marginal book that is so slight in content or has so many weaknesses in style or format that it should be given careful consideration before purchase.
- NR Not recommended.
- SpC Subject matter or treatment will tend to limit the book to specialized collections.
- SpR A book that will have appeal for the unusual reader only. Recommended for the special few who will read it.

Except for pre-school years, reading range is given for grade rather than for age of child.

C.U. Curricular Use.

D.V. Developmental Values.

* * *

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Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO • GRADUATE LIBRARY SCHOOL

Volume 38

DECEMBER, 1984

Number 4

New Titles for Children and Young People

- ✓ Aiken, Joan. ✓ *A Whisper in the Night: Tales of Terror and Suspense*. Delacorte, 1984. 84-3247. ISBN: 0-385-29344-5. 203p. \$14.95.

R
6- Although some of the selections in this eerie collection qualify as horror tales, most are too gentle or even quietly humorous to be more than tales with a macabre or ghostly twist. In "Lob's Girl," for example, the ghost of a faithful dog rouses his young mistress from a coma; in "The Last Specimen" an elderly clergyman receives with equanimity the information that his young visitor is from outer space and that she is collecting a specimen because earth is doomed. All of the stories are carefully crafted and told with that compelling flow that is the mark of the natural storyteller.

- ✓ Alik. ✓ *Feelings*; written and illus. by Alik. Greenwillow, 1984. 84-4098. Library ed. ISBN 0-688-03832-8; Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-03831-X. 32p. \$10.25.

Ad
K-2 Line and wash drawings of children (some very small scale) use dialogue captions to illustrate Alik's interpretation of a range of emotions. Some of the hand-printed words are, in addition to the tiny figures, so small they are hard to see; others are larger and more accessible. This does portray a spectrum of feelings in a way that will make most children able to recognize them as familiar—but it's a patchy format: some of the material is in strip form, some full cartoons, some pages have one large figure and some have one or no words.

- ✓ Andersen, Hans Christian. ✓ *The Nightingale*; tr. by Anthea Bell; illus. by Lisbeth Zwerger. Neugebauer/Alphabet, 1984. 84-9492. ISBN 0-907234-57-7. 22p. \$11.95.

R
4-6 This classic tale of a small bird whose forgiving love saves the life of the Emperor of China after he had rejected it in favor of an artificial copy is always touching. Zwerger has illustrated it with softly colored paintings, effectively spare in composition and giving an impression of strength despite the delicacy of line.

- ✓ Arrick, Fran. ✓ *Nice Girl from Good Home*. Bradbury, 1984. 84-11002. ISBN 0-02-705840-9. 199p. \$11.95.

R
7-10 A family almost disintegrates when the father of the household loses his job; he turns to alcohol, his neurotic wife slips into a psychotic state, his daughter Dory cuts school and spends her time with some tough companions. Only the son, Jeremy, takes constructive action; not only does he get a job as a house-painter, but it is he who suggests a solution to his father for a way to earn money and keep the family together. Caught in an act of malicious mischief, Dory (spoiled and selfish) repents and mends her ways. As the story ends, all signs are encouraging; even Mom, in an

institution where she is getting therapy, is slowly improving. Arrick's story is dark and starkly realistic; the characters are convincing and their problems (and solutions) believable; the one weakness of the book is that Dory's rebellion and her temporarily hostile attitude seem over-reactions.

D.V. Economic differences, understanding; Father-daughter relations

✓ Ashabraner, Brent. ✓ *Gavriel and Jemal: Two Boys of Jerusalem*; illus. with photographs by Paul Conklin. Dodd, 1984. 84-8135. ISBN 0-396-08455-9. 94p. \$10.95.

R
4-6 Photographs of Jerusalem, where the Arab Jemal and the Jewish Gavriel live, give breadth to a text that also is illustrated by many pictures of the two boys and their families. Living close to each other in the Old City, the two boys have never met, but in many ways their lives are similar. Both are serious about an education, devout in their religious observances, devoted to their loving families. Like every resident of Jerusalem, both are aware of, and troubled by, the hostility and tension that fill their city and all of the Middle East. Ashabraner gives good background information to help readers understand problems, similarities, and differences between Jews and Palestinian Arabs, and he does so with scrupulous objectivity and with clarity. A brief index is included.

C.U. History-Middle East

D.V. International understanding

✓ Asimov, Isaac, ed. ✓ *Young Extraterrestrials*; ed. by Isaac Asimov, ✓ Martin Greenberg, and ✓ Charles Waugh. Harper, 1984. 83-49489. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-020168-1; Paper ed. ISBN 0-06-020167-3. 240p. Library ed. \$10.89; Paper ed. \$7.95.

R
7- In eleven stories about alien children, the editors have chosen with acumen and discrimination a variety of material of good quality; this anthology will certainly appeal to science fiction fans and it may even create some new ones. One of the stories is about an outer space dentist whose young patient has a tooth twelve feet high (Piers Anthony's "In the Jaws of Danger") and in Murray Leinster's "Key-hole" the tables are turned when men on the moon try to teach a moon-creature how to communicate. Possibly the story with the widest appeal will be Lloyd Biggle's "Who's On First?" in which four young space visitors show remarkable prowess at baseball, which is organized in quite a different way in 1998.

✓ Avi. ✓ *S.O.R. Losers*. Bradbury, 1984. 84-11022. ISBN 0-02-793410-1. 90p. \$9.95.

Ad
5-7 Told by one of the seventh grade boys who have been ordered to form a soccer team, this is the flippant, usually humorous account of their performance. Because everyone at South Orange River Middle School is expected to play one sport a year, eleven boys who are more interested in academic subjects, art, and music than sports have been dragooned into playing soccer and are being coached by a history teacher who knows absolutely nothing about the game. This is capably written, it may elicit sympathy from readers who are not sports-oriented, and it is funny in a ludicrous vein—but it isn't believable.

D.V. Age-mate relations

✓ Bach, Alice. ✓ *When the Sky Began to Roar*. Houghton, 1984. 84-12901. ISBN 0-395-36071-4. 176p. \$11.95.

Periodically, throughout this novel about five bright, troubled adolescents, there

M 8-10 are italicized passages (at times repetitive) that refer to the death of a teenage girl who has been killed by a subway train, and the clear implication is that it was not an accident. The three boys and two girls, who attend a select private school, are rebels, a secret society in which defiance, deceit, and petty crime have provided thrills; in a story that is candid and at times brutal, the record of theft, truancy, a gang bang, and other antisocial acts lead up—or down—to the ending in which the subway murder is implied rather than described. The book's candor and violence may attract some readers and offend others, but its weakness as a literary entity is in the unrelieved pessimism and the unvarying hostility of the five young people; even danger and violence can be tedious if they are neither given contrast nor made credible.

✓ Baker, Jeannie. ✓ *Home in the Sky*; written and illus. by Jeannie Baker. Greenwillow, 1984. 83-25379. Library ed. ISBN 0-688-03842-5; Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-03841-7. 30p. Library ed. \$10.51; Trade ed. \$13.00.

Ad K-2 The pages of an oversize book are brilliantly illustrated in a mixture of photography and collage that achieves a remarkable sense of depth, although the juxtaposition of human figures against their backgrounds is not always convincing. The text is a bit limp: one of a flock of pigeons gets lost, flies into an elevated car, and is rescued and released—presumably to return to his coop atop an abandoned Manhattan building.

✓ Bates, Betty. ✓ *Say Cheese*; illus. by Jim Spence. Holiday House, 1984. 84-47837. ISBN 0-8234-0540-0. 100p. \$10.95.

Ad 3-5 When fifth-grader Christy wins a hundred dollars in a name-that-tune radio quiz, she's torn between spending it on herself or buying gifts for her family. Her four brothers and sisters give her broad hints, in fact, as to what they'd like for Christmas. Finally Christy decides to buy Dad a new power saw (which will also make it possible for him to make the dollhouse, easel, etc. the other children want) and put the rest in the bank. Given the Christmas theme, the emphasis on family, and the introduction of a satisfying relationship with the boy she likes, Christy's story should appeal to readers, but it's not strong in style or characterization.

D.V. Economic differences, understanding; Family relations; Unselfishness.

✓ Bayer, Jane. ✓ *A My Name is Alice*; illus. by Steven Kellogg. Dial, 1984. 84-7059. Library ed. ISBN 0-8037-0124-1; Trade ed. ISBN 0-8037-0123-3. 28p. Library ed. \$10.89; Trade ed. \$10.95.

Ad 3-5 yrs. Framed pictures, colorful and humorous, are centered on each page of an oversize alphabet book. Kellogg uses the device of the game whose words are used by children playing ball or jumping rope, but he's invented some very odd marriage partners, all animals, such as an ape and an anteater, a turkey and a tiger, a vole and a vulture. The pattern: "A my name is Alice and my husband's name is Alex. We come from Alaska and we sell ants," is above the picture and below it: "Alice is an APE. Alex is an ANTEATER." Far-fetched fun, this is a mildly amusing variant on the standard alphabet book—but not an improvement.

✓ Bonham, Frank. ✓ *Premonitions*. Holt, 1984. 84-3844. ISBN 0-03-071306-4. 166p. \$11.95.

Kevin is sixteen, bright and capable except for his anguished inability to talk to

Ad 7-9 girls. Especially to Anni, whose recently-drowned brother had the reputation of having extrasensory perception. It seems to be Anni, however, who is clairvoyant, and Kevin finally does get to know her, but not to understand her reluctance to talk about her brother. This isn't Bonham at his best in regards to plot and its development, but the story is adequately written, it has some suspense, and the elements of mystery and ESP as well as the budding love affair should appeal to readers.

D.V. Boy-girl relations

✓ Bottner, Barbara. ✓ *The World's Greatest Expert on Absolutely Everything is Crying*. Harper, 1984. 83-49487. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-020589-X; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-020588-1. 150p. Library ed. \$10.89; Trade ed. \$11.50.

M 4-5 Jesse is the fifth grade protagonist who, like other members of her class, is stunned by the beautiful and sophisticated newcomer, Katherine Ann. The latter seems to do everything superbly: cooking, dancing, judo, drawing, and more. At first popular, the expert is soon ostracized, both because she's shown so many people up and because she seems boastful. Turns out she has a neglectful father and a pushing mother, that she really likes the class despite their collective cold-shoulder, and that what she enjoys most of all is playing pop music on the alto sax. Indeed, the book ends with Katherine Ann's participation in a school program in which she abandons her designated Mozart flute selection, tears off her dress to reveal a silver T-shirt, and sets the whole group a-rockin'. Not impressively believable from the start, this really falls apart at the end.

D.V. Age-mate relations; Jealousy, overcoming

✓ Branley, Franklyn Mansfield. ✓ *Shivers and Goose Bumps: How We Keep Warm*; illus. by True Kelley. Crowell, 1984. 82-45921. Library ed. ISBN 0-690-04335-X; Trade ed. ISBN 0-690-04334-1. 95p. Library ed. \$10.89; Trade ed. \$11.50.

R 5-8 Clearly written, authoritative, and comprehensive, this is an excellent discussion of the ways in which the human body loses heat and copes with that heat loss. There are descriptions of the ways animals keep warm, and the range of solutions for people extends from such involuntary mechanisms as shivers and goose bumps to kinds of clothing, houses, and building insulation. A brief bibliography and a fairly extensive index are provided.

C.U. Science

✓ Bruce, Preston. ✓ *From the Door of the White House*; written by Preston Bruce with the assistance of Katharine Johnson, ✓ Patricia Hass, and ✓ Susan Hainey. Lothrop, 1984. 81-23672. ISBN 0-688-00883-6. 176p. illus. with photographs. \$11.50.

Ad 7-10 This is written "with the assistance of" three other people, and it shows in the stiffness of the writing style, the circumspection of the author's comments (a few minor flaws in presidential behavior, but no more than that) and in occasional syntactical lapses that slipped through the multi-author net. The text is a melange of personal memoirs, petty gossip, and background facts about the five presidents (and their families and staffs) who were at the White House in the years of Preston Bruce's service there as doorman. What gives the book the weight and value it has is the character of the author, a black man whose pride, dignity, loyalty, and integrity compensate for the often-mechanical quality of the text.

C.U. History-U.S.

✓✓ Cameron, Eleanor. ✓✓ *Julia's Magic*; illus. by Gail Owens. Dutton, 1984. 84-8118. ISBN 0-525-44114-X. 148p. \$9.95.

R
3-5 Another story about Julia; this one is set just before and leading into *That Julia Redfern* (reviewed in the September, 1982 issue) and has the same structure: a nicely flowing narrative into which linked episodes are woven. Julia's undiscovered misdeed precipitates a crisis in her uncle's household, and Julia makes amends; Julia's parents are told by a waspish landlady that she's sold their house (true) and that they'll have to move (untrue) and Julia begins to differentiate between reality and the magic of her imagination.

D.V. Ethical concepts

✓✓ Carrick, Carol. ✓✓ *Dark and Full of Secrets*; illus. by Donald Carrick. Houghton/Clarion, 1984. 83-21017. ISBN 0-89919-271-8. 29p. \$11.95.

Ad
K-2 Quiet colors reinforce the idea of the mysterious quality of the quiet, shadowed pond that frightens Christopher, in this latest book about a small boy and his large dog. Dad helps Christopher get over his fear when he buys him a mask and snorkel; the dog helps Christopher get back to land when his underwater investigations lead him beyond his depth. Despite the flurry of Christopher's predicament, this is a static book, adequately written but loosely structured, slight in coverage but strong in establishment of setting.

D.V. Fear, overcoming

✓✓ Cauley, Lorinda Bryan, ad. ✓✓ *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*; retold and illus. by Lorinda Bryan Cauley. Putnam, 1984. 84-11532. ISBN 0-399-21123-3; Paper ed. ISBN 0-399-21126-8. 29p. Trade ed. \$11.95; Paper ed. \$4.95.

Ad
K-2 Pastel paintings, flowery and Victorian, illustrate a new version of a classic tale in which urban and rural mice visit each other. The town mouse finds country life involves too much work; the country mouse finds an urban home too dangerous. Each is, therefore, content with his lot. It's still an affable story, but neither the retelling nor the pictures makes a signal contribution.

D.V. Urban-rural contrasts

✓✓ Chambers, John W. ✓✓ *Fire Island Forfeit*. Atheneum, 1984. 84-5671. ISBN 0-689-31043-9. 181p. \$11.95.

Ad
6-8 Some of the adolescents who spend their summers on Fire Island are drawn into the investigation of a murder mystery. Clues are sown liberally, so that the plotting and solution hold little suspense or surprise. Chambers, who writes adequately although occasionally awkwardly ("And he could care less," when the meaning is the opposite) is familiar with the setting and tends to overdo its establishment.

✓✓ Corcoran, Barbara. ✓✓ *The Woman in Your Life*. Atheneum, 1984. 84-2942. ISBN 0-689-31044-7. 159p. \$10.95.

R
8-10 So deeply in love with Aaron that she'd dropped out of college and gone with him to Mexico, Monty doesn't understand that he's exposing her to trouble when he insists she drive back over the border in a borrowed truck with mescaline packed into the spare tire. Aaron is never caught, Monty is jailed. Most of the book is based on Monty's experiences in a woman's prison; part is told by the author, and

the italicized sections are by Monty. The two formats work together, giving a blend of immediacy and detachment. The time in prison is a period of growth for Monty, who learns to judge individuals more clearly, to establish priorities for the future, and above all to understand that the important woman in her life is the decision-maker and judge, herself. Serious, perceptive, and written with craft.

D.V. Self-confidence

- ✓ Delton, Judy. ✓ *Near Occasion of Sin*. Harcourt, 1984. 84-4597. ISBN 0-15-256738-0. 152p. \$12.95.

R
7-10

An only child, a docile Catholic, always fearful and guilty about the sins for which the nuns had told her she would go to purgatory or hell, Tess looked to marriage as the perfect solution to her yearnings, the only right way of life. When she fell in love with Duane, it was hard to resist his sinful if pleasurable caresses, and Tess agreed to a quick marriage. Taught that a husband was to be venerated however he behaved, Tess put up with machismo, bullying, irrational anger, deception, and the growing awareness that she had married a neurotic ne'er-do-well until—just before her baby was due—she simply walked out and went home to her parents. In a chilling ending, the baby is baptized and the whole pattern, it is implied, will start again. This is Delton's most powerful book, a vivid if depressing picture of Catholic education.

D.V. Marriage, preparation for

- ✓ Dunrea, Oliver. ✓ *Ravena*; written and illus. by Oliver Dunrea. Holiday House, 1984. 82-23244. ISBN 0-8234-0487-0. 27p. \$13.95.

Ad
K-2

A small banshee, Ravena is a nonconformist who doesn't participate in banshee group activities; she sneers and is sneered at. She goes looking for a new home and, after a few misadventures, finds an empty cairn; there she's joined by a raven who not only becomes a friend but even likes the watercress soup the other banshees had spurned. Little people appeal to young children, who should also enjoy Ravena's achievement of her goal; this isn't a very substantive story, but it shows the potential of the author-artist, whose rock-framed paintings have a soft quality combined with humor.

- ✓ Eyerly, Jeanette. ✓ *Angel Baker, Thief*. Lippincott, 1984. 84-47634. Library ed. ISBN 0-397-32097-3; Trade ed. ISBN 0-397-32096-5. 246p. Library ed. \$11.89; Trade ed. \$12.50.

Ad
7-9

Her father was gone, her mother often ill; her younger brother and sister (who has cerebral palsy) often yearned for things they couldn't have. Angel was thirteen when she began stealing for them—but it soon grew into a habit; that led to a corrective institution and subsequently to probation and a foster home with the Gardiner family. Angel gets into bad company, is pressured into stealing something by the leader of a shop-lifting ring, and is caught when she's trying to return it. She's saved from a return to an institution when one of her friends appears at the hearing and tells all. In a brief and sugary epilogue, Angel's father turns up, moves his family out west where he at least has the kind of job he wants, and everybody is much happier. This reads more like a fictionalized case history than a narrative, although the style is adequate. Characterization lacks depth, and the pace is uneven.

D.V. Ethical concepts

- ✓ Fadiman, Clifton, comp. ✓ *The World Treasury of Children's Literature*; with additional illus. by Leslie Morrill. Little, 1984. 84-14343. ISBN 0-316-27302-3. 2v. 629p. \$40.00.

R
3-9
yrs. In an handsome two-volume anthology that is profusely illustrated by much of the original art from a wide range of traditional and contemporary favorites, Fadiman states in his informal introduction that two future volumes will contain material for older children. This anthology is a browser's delight, a happy mixture of the best of old and new; most of the selections are from American or British books, but there are some translated classics or near classics. Occasionally a selection is preceded by an editorial note about an author or about a book from which an excerpt is being presented. Contributor, title, and first line indexes are included. An impressive, readable, discriminating anthology.

✓ Gibbons, Gail. ✓ *Fire! Fire!*; written and illus. by Gail Gibbons. Crowell, 1984. 83-46162. Library ed. ISBN 0-690-04416-X; Trade ed. ISBN 0-690-04417-8. 38p. Library ed. \$9.89; Trade ed. \$9.95.

Ad
2-4 Although this gives information succinctly about different kinds of fires and the way they are fought, it is less successful than most of Gibbons' books because the picture book format and the more mature text don't fit together; there are too many details and too sophisticated a vocabulary for most preschool children. The illustrations are neat but a bit too crowded, a bit too stylized. Information on ways to prevent fires and ways to cope with them is given at the back of the book.
C.U. Community life (unit)

✓ Grimm, Jacob Ludwig Karl. ✓ *The Sleeping Beauty*; retold and illus. by Mercer Mayer. Macmillan, 1984. 84-7195. ISBN 0-02-765340-4. 40p. \$14.95.

Ad
3-5 Romantic and stylized, restrainedly erotic in the Aubrey Beardsley vein, this has beautifully detailed paintings. The artist's adaptation of the text (nowhere in book or jacket attributed to the Grimms) is florid and elaborate, more an embroidery for adult folklorists (including Celtic motifs) than a narrative for children, although the curse/long sleep/awakening by a kiss still carry the burden of the tale.

✓ Haskins, James S. ✓ *Space Challenger: The Story of Guion Bluford*; by ✓ Jim Haskins and ✓ Kathleen Benson. Carolrhoda, 1984. 84-4251. ISBN 0-87614-259-5. 64p. illus. with photographs. \$8.95.

R
4-6 A glossary and an index are provided for a simply written biography that gives a dignified picture of the first black astronaut. The text covers adequately the facts of Bluford's life; without becoming laudatory, it affirms the subject's calm dedication to his goal of becoming an aerospace engineer and a pilot, his self-confidence and modesty. There is enough information about the flight of the *Challenger* to satisfy readers.

✓ Hassall, Angela. *Nowhere to Hide*. Oxford/Merrimack, 1984. ISBN 0-19-271494-5. 133p. \$11.95.

Ad
6-8 Aware that the aunt with whom he lives has neither affection nor tolerance for him, constantly bullied and terrorized by one of the burly boys at school, Jason is happy only when he's roaming about with his friend Dave. Together, in this story from England, they ramble about the countryside and even find a secret hideaway. What keeps Jason from complaining, in part, is his fear of the authorities, a fear of being put "in Care." Jason decides to run away and camp on an uninhabited island; picked up by the police, he finds his aunt has decamped and he asks to be taken to

Dave's house. The ending is a happy one, if a bit pat: Dave's parents decide to take Jason on as a foster child, because they need the money, it will entitle them to a bigger house, and they are kind people. So, after a heavy dose of harsh realism, Jason becomes part of a big, noisy, happy family. This has good style, adequate characterization, and uneven structure.

D.V. Friendship values; self confidence

- ✓ Heide, Florence Parry. ✓ *Time Flies*; illus. by Marilyn Hafner. Holiday House, 1984. 84-47833. ISBN 0-8234-0542-7. 97p. \$10.95.

R
4-6 There's a bit of off-beat Treehorn-type humor in this amusing story told by Noah, who's busy evading chores set by his time-expert father, who adjusts to the burden of a noisy new sibling, who gains confidence as one after another of his ideas (deliberately or accidentally) proves fruitful. Heide's at her best when she writes with a light, wry touch, and in this book that's maintained throughout. The scribbly line drawings pick up the note of casual, cheerful muddle very nicely.

D.V. Baby, adjustment to; Father-son relations

- ✓ Heilbroner, Joan. ✓ *Tom the T.V. Cat*; illus. by Sal Murdocca. Random House, 1984. 83-24600. Library ed. ISBN 0-394-96708-9; Paper ed. ISBN 0-394-86708-4. 48p. Library ed. \$5.99; Paper ed. \$2.95.

M
1-2 Tom had always been a big help around the fish store as cleaner, mouser, and assistant counter worker, but when the fish man bought a television set, Tom spent too much time watching it. Each TV hero he saw (a singer, a strong man, Superman) Tom tried to imitate, always with disastrous results. After a number of evenings in which he was called names, or was hit by thrown objects, Tom reverted to his previous pattern of feline docility. Slightly comic, slightly didactic, this may afford some amusement and some practice for beginning independent readers, but it's an unconvincing story, a cartoon in words. The illustrations are of the same calibre.

C.U. Reading, beginning

- ✓ Hewitt, Kathryn. ✓ *Two by Two: The Untold Story*; written and illus. by Kathryn Hewitt. Harcourt, 1984. 84-4579. ISBN 0-15-291801-9. 29p. \$12.95.

R
K-3 In an amusing adaptation of the Biblical version, so light-hearted it would be hard for even the most devout to take offense, Hewitt postulates a different kind of voyage for Noah and his arkful. To entice the reluctant animals aboard, he has advertised the voyage as a pleasure cruise; the rain spoils the planned fun, but eventually the sun comes out, the land dries up, and the dove returns with a (stuffed) olive branch. The paintings are not polished but they have an exuberant vitality and some comic touches (God's messenger is a bellboy, the giraffe gets stuck in a doorway, a pig shows a sunburn line when her sunsuit strap slips) and the text has the same kind of humor: the animals, gloating over their invitations, say, "On a deluxe vessel, too! Well, when it rains, it pours!" Uninhibited fun.

- ✓ Hill, Eric. ✓ *Spot Goes to School*; written and illus. by Eric Hill. Putnam, 1984. 84-42695. ISBN 0-399-21073-3. 22p. \$9.95.

Heavy pages and pull-up flaps indicate the expectation of heavy use and the awareness of game appeal to young children in a beginning-school story in which the

R characters are animals. Spot has fun, makes friends, maybe even learns something.
3-5 The text is simple, the message encouraging, and the naive illustrations bright with
yrs. color and not too busy with detail.

✓ Hines, Anna Grossnickle. ✓ *Maybe A Band-Aid Will Help*; written and illus. by Anna Grossnickle Hines. Dutton, 1984. 84-1533. ISBN 0-525-44115-8. 22p. \$8.95.

Ad Precisely detailed and softly colored illustrations are nicely integrated with the text
3-5 of a modest story that should compensate by its everyday familiarity for what it
yrs. lacks in structure and development of plot. Her mother always seems to be too busy to sew on the cloth leg of a favorite doll; Sarah tries to help so that Mama will have time to fix the doll, but only makes a mess that causes maternal anger; Mama says she is sorry she was cross and she fixes the doll after a mother-daughter cuddle.

D.V. Mother-daughter relations

✓ Hoffman, E.T.A. ✓ *Nutcracker*; tr. by Ralph Manheim; illus. by Maurice Sendak. Crown, 1984. 83-25266. ISBN 0-517-55285-X. 99p. \$19.95.

R elements missing here, and unexpected additions. Manheim has translated the original
8- story of 1916, and Sendak has illustrated it, with a sense of fidelity to the
* original but with an imaginative interpretation rather than a literal one. The book includes the story of the Princess Pirlipat and the Hard Nut, and there are passages that seem extended or repetitive, but the tale is so beautifully bound together by profuse and stunning illustrations that it is a joy simply to leaf through the book; children may become restive at the lag in pace, but scholars should be fascinated by the variations between this version and the 1983 publication, also based on the original rather than the ballet, translated by Anthea Bell and illustrated by Lisbeth Zwerger. This is more for adults than children, but there will be many children who will enjoy it.

✓ Holland, Isabelle. ✓ *Green Andrew Green*; illus. by Pat Steiner. Westminster, 1984. 84-2402. ISBN 0-664-32714-1. 79p. \$9.95.

NR After he turned green, Andrew became a pariah, and he began to hate everybody.
3-5 By walking into a television set, he entered a world where everything was green, but a girl he met there changed the color of his clothes by magic. Back in real life, he found a cat but felt ambivalent about keeping it. Also, he turned purple. Also, he met a man who called himself the Fisher of Men whose dog shared his miraculous powers. In the end, Andrew has to choose between a selfish goal and keeping the cat, and he chooses the cat. Naturally, he loses his green color. This is an awkward juxtaposition of fantasy, realism, and theology, not badly written but weakly conceived so that it is ineffective either as a literary entity or as an object lesson in piety.

✓ Howe, James. ✓ *The Day the Teacher Went Bananas*; illus. by Lillian Hoban. Dutton, 1984. 84-1536. ISBN 0-525-44107-7. 27p. \$9.95.

R Hoban at her frothiest is just right for a blandly-told nonsense story that should
K-2 be tremendously appealing to the read-aloud set. Independent readers may secretly enjoy the humor even if they feel lofty about picture books. Unusually, this is a second-person narrative by the members of a primary-grades class who are delighted with their new teacher, who is shown in the illustrations to be a gorilla. The prin-

cial comes in and announces that there's been a mistake, and he introduces the real teacher who "was sent to the zoo by mistake." He takes over and the gorilla amicably goes off with a keeper. The next day the whole class goes to the zoo to have an all-banana lunch with their favorite teacher. No message, just fun.

✓ Johnston, Tony. ✓ *The Witch's Hat*; illus. by Margot Tomes. Putnam, 1984. 84-9948. ISBN 0-399-21010-5. 29p. \$9.95.

Ad Tomes uses touches of clean pinks and blues to contrast effectively with earth-
K-2 tones in illustrations that are restrainedly comic. The text is somewhat less effective, moving in sedate and patterned fashion to follow a story line about a witch's hat that, after having fallen into a magic pot, is chased by the witch and changes from hat to bat to rat to cat to hat. What doesn't quite work is the self-perpetuating magic; no spell, no impetus for the changes.

✓ Jonas, Ann. ✓ *The Quilt*; written and illus. by Ann Jonas. Greenwillow, 1984. 83-25385. Library ed. ISBN 0-688-03826-3; Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-03825-5. 32p. Library ed. \$9.55; Trade ed. \$10.25.

Ad Handsomely and imaginatively illustrated in bright, warm colors, this is a tepid
3-5 story that breaks into two parts. First, a child talks about the quilt that her parents
yrs. have made for her "new grown-up bed," and she points out where the material for some of the squares came from. Then the girl (brown, pretty) dreams that she's lost her toy dog and she hunts for it in various places, then wakes to find dog and quilt on the floor. "Good morning, Sally," she says to her toy, and the story abruptly ends.

✓ Jones, Diana Wynne. ✓ *Fire and Hemlock*. Greenwillow, 1984. 84-4084. ISBN 0-688-02963-9. 341p. \$13.00.

R An intricately woven, highly original fantasy is firmly meshed in its realistic matrix
6-9 to provide a long and satisfying read that also has a subtle but powerful love interest. The story begins with Polly, packing for her first year at college, musing over her childhood and trying to piece together some wispy memories that don't quite fit, some associations that are elusive. As the past events emerge, it becomes increasingly clear that occult forces have played a part in her childhood friendship with a young musician who has befriended her—but why are there some people who seem bent on thwarting the friendship and who even threaten her welfare? The characters, the dialogue, and the style are impressive.

✓ Joy, Margaret. *Days, Weeks and Months*; illus. by Juliet Renny. Faber, 1984. ISBN 0-571-13171-9. 107p. \$12.95.

R After a discussion of the calendar systems of various ancient cultures, the text
3-6 goes through a year citing, month by month, major events of that month in different countries or religions. Explanation of the names of months are included, as they later are for days of the week, and these are fairly fulsome. In addition to the observances based on the Gregorian calendar, the book describes observances of the Jewish year and the Muslim year. It concludes with some examples, in several languages, of the verses that help children memorize the names of the days of the week, with lists of Roman numerals and frequently used abbreviations, and with a bibliography and an index. Crisp, clear, informative, and moderately comprehensive, this is a book with minor reference use.

✓ Kawamata, Kazuhide. ✓ *We Live in Japan*. Bookwright Press/Watts, 1984. 84-70774. ISBN 0-531-03796-7. 60p. illus. with photographs. \$9.90.

Ad 4-6 A series of brief statements (two pages each, with photographs taking one-third to one-half the space)) gives information about how the speakers live and work in contemporary Japan. One of those interviewed is a school girl, the rest are adults; the focus therefore is not so much on life-styles as it is on occupations. Moderately informative, but patchy. A list of facts about Japan, a glossary, and an index (one page each) are appended.

✓ Kellogg, Steven, ad. ✓ *Paul Bunyan*; retold and illus. by Steven Kellogg. Morrow, 1984. 83-26684. Library ed. ISBN 0-688-03850-6; Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-03849-2. 39p. Library ed. \$12.88; Trade ed. \$13.00.

R K-3 Kellogg uses oversize pages for busy, detail-crowded illustrations that have vitality and humor, echoing the exaggeration and ebullience of the story, a compression of some of the tall tales about the legendary Paul Bunyan and his blue ox Babe. Some of the geographical details will make little impact on the read-aloud audience, but there's enough that will be familiar to make this an enjoyable romp for young children.

✓ Klass, David. ✓ *The Atami Dragons*. Scribner, 1984. 84-14052. ISBN 0-684-18223-8. 134p. \$12.95.

Ad 6-9 Jerry, the narrator, hated to go, leaving the rest of his baseball team hunting for a new first baseman, but when his father proposed that Jerry and his sister come along on an assignment in Japan, it was impossible to refuse—even though Dad said he could arrange it so that Jerry could stay with an uncle. The family was too recently bereaved to be divided, Jerry felt, and they needed each other to help get over Mom's death. Jerry joins a local baseball team in the town of Atami and enjoys his new friends; on a climb of Mount Fuji, the family piles up rocks as a shrine and a farewell to Mom. The writing style is adequate although occasionally florid, the characterization is adequate but lacks depth, the writing style is capable; the story has a slight tinge of travelogue.

✓ Kumin, Maxine W. ✓ *The Microscope*; illus. by Arnold Lobel. Harper, 1984. 82-47728. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-023524-1; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-023523-3. 28p. Library ed. \$9.89; Trade ed. \$9.95.

R K-3 Both factual and merry, this brief and deft poem first appeared as one of the selections in *The Wonderful Babies of 1809 (And Other Years)* in 1968. It points out that Anton van Leeuwenhoek neglected his business to pursue investigation of the new worlds visible through the first crude microscopes. This isn't quite accurate, since it ends "That's how we got the microscope." Still, the combined talents of a Pulitzer Prize poet and a Caldecott Medal artist have created a small gem, Lobel's pseudograve pictures having the hatched, incised look of old lithographs.

✓ Langton, Jane. ✓ *The Fragile Flag*. Harper, 1984. 83-49471. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-023699-X; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-023698-1. 275p. Library ed. \$11.89; Trade ed. \$11.95.

Georgie, one of the children of a Concord family that has been prominent in earlier fantasies by Langton, is determined that the (fictional) President get her letter

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5-7
* about what the flag of the United States stands for. With no other way to get to Washington, Georgie decides to walk, carrying an old flag that has been in the family attic. The flag has magical powers, inducing visions of what war might bring, but it doesn't have any magical effect upon the action. Georgie's cousins march with her, so do a few friends, including one girl who pushes a baby brother in his carriage. (The willingness of all parents to let their children march through state after state along a major highway requires suspension of disbelief). By the time Georgie and her fragile flag reach the District of Columbia there are thirteen thousand children from all parts of the country who are marching for peace. The President bows to their numbers and calls off the launching of a nuclear missile. This is a message book; it is anti-missile, anti-war; it assumes a militant and reactionary leader and a public and a press who are opposed to his views. There may be differences of opinion about the political-military implications of the story; there can be little disagreement about its effectiveness as a piece of dramatic and polished writing. The book has good pace, momentum, strong characters, and a sturdy story line.

✓ L'Engle, Madeleine. ✓ *A House Like a Lotus*. Farrar, 1984. 84-48471. ISBN 374-33385-8. 308p. \$13.95.

Ad
7-10 In a sequel to *The Arm of the Starfish* and *Dragons in The Waters*, Polly (now seventeen) is the narrator, and her story is told partly in interpolated flashback sequences. The technique is not confusing, but it does grow a bit tedious as the explanation for what was clearly a traumatic event emerges very, very slowly. However, L'Engle writes effectively enough to compensate for this, and Polly's story at both levels is colorful: her present is a trip to Athens and Cyprus, where she makes an amazing variety of friends, gains an admirer, nearly drowns, and periodically voices the author's ideas on ethical or theistic issues; her past has the double crises of having an older woman, a beloved friend who is a lesbian, make advances while drunk and—while still in shock—losing her virginity. These are handled in dignified fashion; characters are vivid and well-differentiated; it's only the pace that's weakened by the structure.

D.V. Older-younger generations

✓ Lewis, Thomas P. ✓ *Mr. Sniff and the Motel Mystery*; illus. by Beth Lee Weiner. Harper, 1984. 82-47729. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-023825-9; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-023824-0. 64p. (An I-Can-Read Book.) Library ed. \$8.89; Trade ed. \$8.95.

R
1-2 Both the canine cast and the mystery should appeal to beginning independent readers. Mr. Sniff, a detective who is staying at Mutt's motel, has several clues: a message in lipstick on a mirror, a jellyfish in the swimming pool, a bell that doesn't work, a green "thing" seen by the local doctor. These are all logically sorted, and Mr. Sniff comes up with the answer and shows his kindness at the same time. The illustrations are adequate, soft-colored line and wash, and the story is told simply and sequentially to facilitate reading ease.

C.U. Reading, beginning

✓ Locker, Thomas. ✓ *Where the River Begins*; written and illus. by Thomas Locker. Dutton, 1984. 84-1709. Trade ed. ISBN 0-8037-0089-X; Library ed. ISBN 0-8037-0090-3. 27p. Library ed. \$14.89; Trade ed. \$15.00.

Although the two small boys and their grandfather, who trace a small river to its source, are adequately pictured, it is in the painting of the landscapes that Locker

R
4-6 excels, in trees and changing skies and the light reflected by the river at different times of day. The story is simple and serene, yet it communicates the feeling that both generations of hikers have about the beauty of the countryside and the flow of "their" river.

✓
✓ Lowry, Lois. ✓ *Us and Uncle Fraud*. Houghton, 1984. 84-12783. ISBN 0-395-36833-X. 148p. \$10.95.

R
4-6 Uncle Claude is, according to Father, a cadger and a layabout; according to Mother, her brother Claude is a sweet, gentle dreamer. According to Louise, the narrator, and her brother Marcus, Uncle Claude is fun, an exciting visitor who goes off abruptly leaving them the promise of a treasure hidden in the house—Faberge eggs, they have been led to believe. But they find no treasure, suspect that Claude's a fraud and—even worse—that he's a thief. They know (but can't tell) that Claude knew where there was a hidden key to a house where a robbery had been committed. The story has Lowry's usual wit, humor, and polish; it also has more drama than some of her other books, because of the combination of the excitement of a flood, suspense about the robbery, and tension about an older brother who is swept away in the flood and is for a long time in a coma before he recovers.

D.V. Family relations; Uncle-niece relations

✓
✓ Meltzer, Milton. ✓ *A Book About Names*; illus. by Mischa Richter. Crowell, 1984. 83-45241. Library ed. ISBN 0-690-04381-3; Trade ed. ISBN 0-690-04380-5. 128p. Library ed. \$10.89; Trade ed. \$11.50.

Ad
6- Cartoon style drawings that are witty and deft (and that will be familiar to readers of the *New Yorker* magazine) illustrate a book less serious than most of those by the author. This is a potpourri of facts, with—in no discernible arrangement—a page or two devoted to each brief, topical treatment of names. It includes information about origins, meanings, legends, fads, customs, taboos, formal decrees about naming children, etc. Not weighty, and much of the material is in other, similar books for adults, but it's a good browsing book, and there's something in it to intrigue most readers.

✓
✓ Milton, Joyce. ✓ *Secrets of the Mummies*; illus. with drawings by Dolores R. Santoliquido and with photographs. Random House, 1984. 84-1963. Library ed. ISBN 0-394-96769-0; Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-86769-6. 69p. Library ed. \$5.99; Trade ed. \$4.95.

R
2-4 Simply if at times chopply written, this is a mixture of facts about ancient Egypt, mummies, and the process of mummification. There are also chapters on related topics, such as tomb robberies or the craze, during the Middle Ages, for taking medicine made of ground mummies. In a chapter on the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb, Milton gives a hint of the careful way in which archeologists work. Pedestrian but often informative drawings are provided in addition to photographs of mummies and artifacts. This is not coverage in depth, but it's an adequate introduction that may stimulate further investigation by young readers.

✓
✓ Modell, Frank. ✓ *Goodbye Old Year, Hello New Year*; written and illus. by Frank Modell. Greenwillow, 1984. 84-4020. Library ed. ISBN 0-688-03939-1; Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-03938-3. 28p. Library ed. \$9.55; Trade ed. \$11.25.

Firm flyaway lines and solid, clear colors are used in cheerful line-and-wash draw-

R
K-3 ings to illustrate a fourth engaging book about those enterprising boys, Marvin and Milton. This time they assembly noisemakers and paper hats to celebrate the coming of the New Year; knowing they won't be allowed to stay up until midnight, they each go to sleep and set an alarm clock. Marvin's doesn't go off; Milton sleeps through the noise; when they wake in the wee hours they celebrate anyway, at least until the neighbors' protests send them back indoors to indulge in cake and milk. Light, cheerful, with no trace of message, ethical concept, didacticism, or usefulness.
C.U. Holidays

✓ Myers, Walter Dean. ✓ *Mr. Monkey and the Gotcha Bird*; illus. by Leslie Morrill. Delacorte, 1984. 82-18241. ISBN 0-385-29292-9. 27p. \$14.95.

Ad
K-2 Bright and rather busy paintings illustrate a story in the folk tradition, with the pictures taking up most of the space on oversize pages. Caught up by the huge white bird (who says "Gotcha" when he catches his prey) clever Mr. Monkey talks his way out of being eaten by suggesting a series of other animals; by the time he gets to Mr. Lion, the satiated bird is too heavy to get away. No folktale moral here, just a tale of a clever animal who's willing to see others killed just so he is spared. The story is adequately told in the style and with the motifs, the jacket states, of African and Caribbean sources: "Long time ago before you born, Monkey he live in a place you don't know about... One day Monkey he thinking how he big stuff."

✓ Newton, Suzanne. ✓ *An End to Perfect*. Viking/Kestrel, 1984. 84-7307. ISBN 0-670-29487-X. 212p. \$11.95.

R
5-7 All's well in Arden's world, she likes the small town in which she lives, she has no problems at school, she loves her best friend Dorjo, and she is on very good terms with her parents and her older brother. The end to this happy state comes when brother Hill, bored by the small town school (which baffles Arden) ask if he can move to a larger town and live with his grandparents so that he can go to school there. Then there's Dorjo. Her vagrant mother, selfish and demanding, has again appeared to disrupt the life Dorjo and her older sister have made for themselves; Dorjo runs away, is taken in by Arden's family, and is ambivalent about returning home. Arden wants her friend to stay but realizes that Dorjo must learn to cope with her mother and that she can't keep her friend by her side forever, that there's an end to perfect. This isn't as strong a story as the author's *I Will Call It Georgie's Blues*, but it is just as acute in its perception of the complexity of familial problems, and it is just as polished and profound in its style and its depth of characterization.

D.V. Family relations; Friendship values

✓ Ormerod, Jan. ✓ *101 Things to do With a Baby*; written and illus. by Jan Ormerod. Lothrop, 1984. 84-4401. Library ed. ISBN 0-688-03802-6; Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-03801-8. 28p. Library ed. \$9.55; Trade ed. \$10.25.

R
4-6 yrs. A small girl (and her parents) play with and care for an infant brother or do the day's chores with the baby in the background. There is no story line, no dialogue, but there are—numbered—a hundred and one suggestions in the captions for pictures that have clean lines and clear colors and that are affectionate without being sentimentalized.

✓ Oxenbury, Helen. ✓ *The Important Visitor*; written and illus. by Helen Oxenbury. Dial, 1984. 84-7112. ISBN 0-8037-0125-X. 16p. \$5.95.

The very small girl who tells a brief but lively story is the unwitting culprit when

R her mother has an important visitor. Mr. Thorn came to talk about work, but what
3-6 with his allergy to a hard-to-get-rid-of cat (who came back in when the child opened
yrs. a window) and the impromptu dancing by the narrator, not much work was dis-
cussed. The illustrations are deft and comic, the story told with an ingenuous quality
that never lapses into cuteness.

✓ Perl, Lila. ✓ *Tybee Trimble's Hard Times*. Houghton/Clarion, 1984. 84-4310. ISBN 0-89919-288-2. 143p. \$10.95.

Ad Tybee is ten, and her problem is that she wants desperately to get to the annual
4-5 circus, but her parents say they can't afford it. She tries various ways of earning
money and finally does amass enough—but at the last moment, Tybee changes her
mind and decides to buy something for her mother, who is hospitalized, and save the
rest. This is pleasant, low-keyed, and realistic save for the fact that it's hard to
believe a girl of ten would think (her father has long worked for a law firm) that a
“bar exam” means jumping over a bar or that the teacher's assignment of an essay
is interpreted as a mysterious assignment called an “S.A.”

D.V. Economic differences, understanding; Parent-child relations

✓ Robinson, Charles Alexander. ✓ *Ancient Egypt*; rev. by Lorna Greenberg. Watts, 1984. 84-3653. ISBN 0-531-04819-5. 63p. illus. with photographs. \$8.90.

R Few changes have been made in the text of a book first published in 1961, for-
4-7 tunately, since this was and is one of the most authoritative and thorough examina-
tions of an ancient culture that we have for children. New photographs and a time
chart have been added and the reading list has been revised to add to the usefulness
of a book that gives a succinct historical overview and good coverage of such aspects
of the culture of ancient Egypt as its religion or the quality of life for the ordinary
citizen.

C.U. History-Egypt

✓ Ross, David H. ✓ *Space Monster Gorp and the Runaway Computer*; written and illus. by David
Ross. Walker, 1984. 80-54705. ISBN 0-8027-6524-6. 28p. \$8.85.

NR Virulently colored and badly drawn illustrations fail to enhance a story that has a
2-4 weak plot and mediocre writing style. Too bad: such elements as monsters, space,
and computers appeal to most readers, but they are carelessly put together here in a
story about a computer that can't stop producing destructive robots and a green
space monster (the biggest creature in the universe) who solves the problem.

✓ Singer, Isaac Bashevis. ✓ *Stories for Children*. Farrar, 1984. 84-13612. ISBN 374-37266-7. 338p.
\$13.95.

R Most of the selections and excerpts included in this collection will be familiar to
4- Singer fans, but some have not previously been published in book form. All the
stories are told with flow and spontaneity, most of them will appeal because of their
wit and humor, and it is a pleasure to have in one volume so much richness of oral
tradition and individual creativity. Because of the title, adolescents may scorn the
book (their loss) but many adults will enjoy it.

- ✓ Skorpen, Liesel Moak. ✓ *Grace*. Harper, 1984. 83-49472. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-025799-7; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-025798-9. 87p. Library ed. \$10.89; Trade ed. \$11.50.

Ad 6-8 Warned by the police and reprimanded by her parents for harassing and frightening the dour old neighbor who yells and threatens whenever Sara cuts across her property, Sara is reluctant to apologize as her parents insist she must. After that, she promises, she'll never set foot on Mrs. Craig's property. But from the day she answers a feeble call for help, twelve-year-old Sara begins daily visits, feeding the old woman (Grace) and cleaning her house, learning about her past and reading aloud to her. All this is done (not quite believably) without anyone's knowledge; all summer Sara avoids her friends and evades her parents. At the end of the summer, when Grace dies, Sara is shaken. This has touching moments but it seems purposive, a demonstration of a friendship across the generations. Adequately written, but narrow in scope, the book ends on a sentimental note that weakens it.

D.V. Older-younger generations

- ✓ Skurzynski, Gloria. ✓ *Caught in the Moving Mountains*; illus. by Ellen Thompson. Lothrop, 1984. 84-4371. ISBN 0-688-01635-9. 143p. \$11.00.

Ad 5-7 Paul is often ineffectual, his adopted brother Lance seems to do everything well; their father has sent the boys off to hike and camp in the Idaho mountains because he feels it will stiffen Paul, make him more manly—i.e. more like Lance. This doesn't have the usual pattern of jealousy followed by acceptance, for Paul adores Lance. What does weaken the book, although it's adequately written and has consistent characterization, is the double drama that becomes melodrama: the boys' lives are threatened when they encounter a wounded aviator whose plane has crashed while he's bringing drugs in from Mexico; then the man is killed by an earthquake. Less could mean more here.

D.V. Brothers; Courage; Self-reliance

- ✓ Sobol, Donald J. ✓ *Encyclopedia Brown's Book of Wacky Sports*; illus. by Ted Enik. Morrow, 1984. 82-84250. ISBN 0-688-03884-0. 112p. \$9.25.

R 3-6 Sports fans usually enjoy reading about odd mishaps, freakish plays, and unusual happenings, and this not only has them in profusion, but describes them in a jaunty, informal writing style. The book is divided into five sections: basketball, baseball, football, boxing, and other sports. Lightweight but amusing browsing fare.

- ✓ Sullivan, George. ✓ *Baseball's Wacky Players*. Dodd, 1984. 84-13590. ISBN 0-396-08459-1. 146p. illus. with photographs. \$10.95.

Ad 4-7 A collection of anecdotes about the personalities and pranks of baseball players plus a few managers and umpires. Some of the ploys are silly rather than funny—attention-getting or publicity-seeking mechanisms rather than impromptu ebullience or calculated trick—but there's much that's amusing. Repetitive or not, this will undoubtedly appeal to baseball fans.

- ✓ Sullivan, Mary Ann. ✓ *Child of War*. Holiday House, 1984. 84-47832. ISBN 0-8234-0537-0. 129p. \$10.95.

Save for the fact that this makes clear the bitter hostility of the warring factions in Belfast, it has little to recommend it. It is written in pedestrian style, it lacks objec-

NR
6-8 tivity, it is weak in structure and superficial in characterization. Maeve is thirteen, her mother (who had obtained arms for the IRA) is dead, and when a British soldier shoots her baby brother she decides to become active in the cause, and she acts as a lookout for a bombing in a Protestant neighborhood. While the story shows violence on both sides, the vindictiveness and unprovoked brutality (a British soldier kicks a child in the face) always come from one side and the righteous indignation and self-defense from the other.

✓ Tamar, Erika. ✓ *Good-bye, Glamour Girl*. Lippincott, 1984. 83-49493. Library ed. ISBN 0-397-32088-4; Trade ed. ISBN 0-397-32087-6. 218p. Library ed. \$11.89; Trade ed. \$12.50.

Ad
6-9 Liesl Rosen is one of a family of Jewish refugees from wartime Vienna and she tells the story of her infatuation with Rita Hayworth, her friendship with delinquent Billy Laramie, her adjustment to life in Manhattan. In a story that is adequately written and that has good period details but is not strong in plot or pace, Liesl describes the change from friendship to love and the last, bitter parting with Billy; in the sadness of the parting, Liesl gives up the self-dramatization that has been a major theme throughout her adolescence.

D.V. Adaptability; Boy-girl relations

✓ Westall, Robert. ✓ *The Cats of Seroster*. Greenwillow, 1984. 84-4177. ISBN 0-688-03944-8. 306p. \$13.00.

Ad
7-9 In a long and overwritten fantasy, Westall posits a young and often unwilling hero, Cam, who is an appealing character, fighting for the good of a country into which he has wandered and in the saving of which he inherits the title of "Seroster," a legendary hero who is periodically replaced. The cats, who communicate telepathically with each other (and some with Cam) are instrumental in helping the forces of good, led by Cam, to defeat the evil men of the land. What is oddly unlike Westall is the use of long and tedious passages in which the cats talk to each other thus: "Fine night for run? Not tired?" Answer: "Strong-leg—weak-jaw. Some fine beetles pass. Not too hard kill." Not an unbearable device, but overdone. Otherwise, the story is strong, with good characters and human dialogue, and with an effective handling of the conflict between good and evil.

✓ Winter, Jeanette, ad. ✓ *The Girl and the Moon Man*; retold and illus. by Jeanette Winter. Pantheon Books, 1984. 83-19462. Library ed. ISBN 0-394-96326-1; Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-86326-7. 29p. Library ed. \$10.99; Trade ed. \$10.95.

Ad
2-3 A Siberian folktale is retold and is illustrated with gray-toned drawings; the man is a big moon-face out of which emerge arms and legs that are human and clothed. This does not have the narrative flow that the best folk literature has, but it is an adequate adaptation of a story that explains why the moon changes as it moves through the sky. Basically, the flaw is in the tale: enchanted by a girl's flute-playing, the moon comes to earth to try to capture her but she evades him by magic. When the moon is weary and the girl ties his limbs, he promises never to come back and always to light up the night sky; in other words, it pairs miscreant behavior with unrelated result—not the stuff of which the most effective "Pourquoi" stories are made.

✓ Wolitzer, Hilma. ✓ *Wish You Were Here*. Farrar, 1984. 84-10112. ISBN 374-38456-8. 180p. \$9.95.

R
5-7 Bernie Segal, the thirteen-year-old narrator, has a problem. He cannot accept the idea of a stepfather, and he's determined that when his widowed mother marries the irritatingly cheerful Nat, he'll run away to Florida and live with his paternal grandfather. Much of the story is devoted to Bernie's efforts to amass enough money for air fare, and he finally does acquire a ticket—only to learn that the surprise Grandpa has written about was that he was coming north for the wedding. The main plot is balanced by deftly-incorporated sub-plots: Bernie's first romance, his squabbles with his sister, his antipathy toward Nat (he gets over it) and his interest in a play in which his sister has a lead part. The story ends on a positive note that nicely avoids being sugary. Characters are firmly drawn, the story has good balance and pace, and it is strong in its easy, deceptively casual writing style, particularly in dialogue.

D.V. Boy-girl relations; Stepparent-child relations

✓ Wolitzer, Meg. ✓ *Caribou*. Greenwillow, 1984. 84-4142. ISBN 0-688-03991-X. 167p. \$10.25.

Ad
7-9 Twelve-year-old Becca, who tells the story, wishes she had lenient, understanding parents like those of her best friend Kate. But Mom lets Dad make all the decisions, and Dad is a petty tyrant. Since the time is 1970 and Becca's beloved only brother Stevie is nineteen, and his birthday makes him eligible for the draft, Becca is afraid he'll go to Vietnam and be killed. Dad thinks his son should be proud to fight for his country and is angry when Stevie decides to go to Canada. Much of the book centers around Becca's desire to use the money from winning an art contest to visit Stevie. At first Dad refuses; eventually he relents. Becca, meanwhile, has been forming and firming her own anti-war attitudes. This is capably written and adequately structured, but it seems at times more an exploration of viewpoints on the war than a narrative about an adolescent girl.

D.V. Brothers-sisters; Pacific attitudes

✓ Yep, Laurence. ✓ *The Tom Sawyer Fires*. Morrow, 1984. 84-14688. ISBN 0-688-03861-1. 136p. \$10.50.

Ad
5-7 The adolescent street vagrant who calls himself the Duke of Baywater is again the narrator in this sequel to *The Mark Twain Murders* (reviewed in the July, 1982 issue) and the setting is again San Francisco during the time of the Civil War. The same Confederate spy is the villain; the hero is a fireman named Tom Sawyer, who is almost a Superman type. Together the Duke, Twain, and Sawyer fight and track down the evil arsonist. There's some fact here and therefore some historical interest, but it's primarily a suspense story and, like its predecessor (and unlike Yep's other books) is overdone, stretched both in plot and characterization.

✓ Zindel, Paul. ✓ *Harry & Hortense at Hormone High*. Harper, 1984. 82-47697. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-026869-7; Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-026864-6. 151p. Library ed. \$10.89; Trade ed. \$11.50.

Ad
7-9 One of an adhesive twosome. Harry is the narrator who describes the triangular friendship he and Hortense reach with remarkable speed when they meet Jason Rohr. They know Jason is a borderline psychotic (he's convinced he's Icarus and puts up letters on the school bulletin board that are signed, "Icarus, a god.") but they also are aware that Jason is in need of their friendship and that he burns with

an idealism that has only altruistic motives. Jason wants to save and improve the world and he proposes to start with Hormone High. As a story of friendship, this is moving; as the story of a disturbed adolescent it has conviction. What weakens the book is the exaggeration (for humorous effect) in describing people, particularly adults, and events, so that the impact of the real and tragic story is lessened.

D.V. Friendship values

✓ Zolotow, Charlotte. ✓ *I Know a Lady*; illus. by James Stevenson. Greenwillow, 1984. 83-25361. Library ed. ISBN 0-688-03838-7; Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-03837-9. 21p. Library ed. \$9.55; Trade ed. \$10.25.

R
K-2 Most small children derive a special pleasure from the affection of adults whose feelings could not possibly be construed as dutiful, i.e. dependent on familial obligation. Zolotow expresses this pleasure very effectively by having the narrator describe an elderly neighbor who is generous and welcoming and even remembers the name of your dog as well as your name! To children, names and identities are very important, and they are aware of the fact that many adults think of them as just "little girl" or "my neighbor's little boy." Stevenson has accommodated his usually humorous style to focus here on cozy interior and verdant outdoor scenes, a complementary bouquet.

D.V. Older-younger generations

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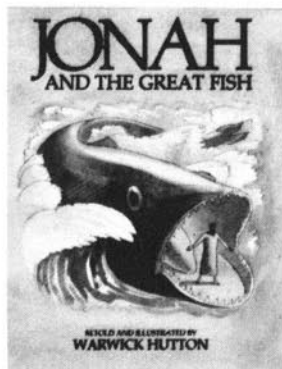
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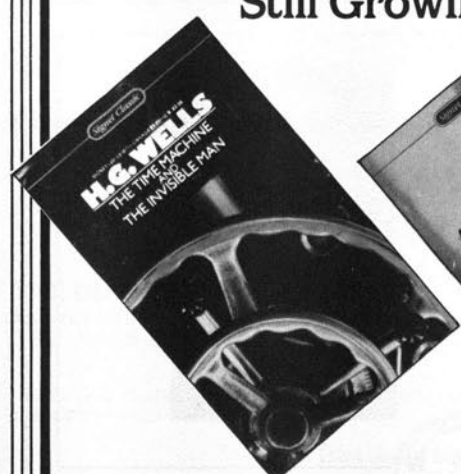
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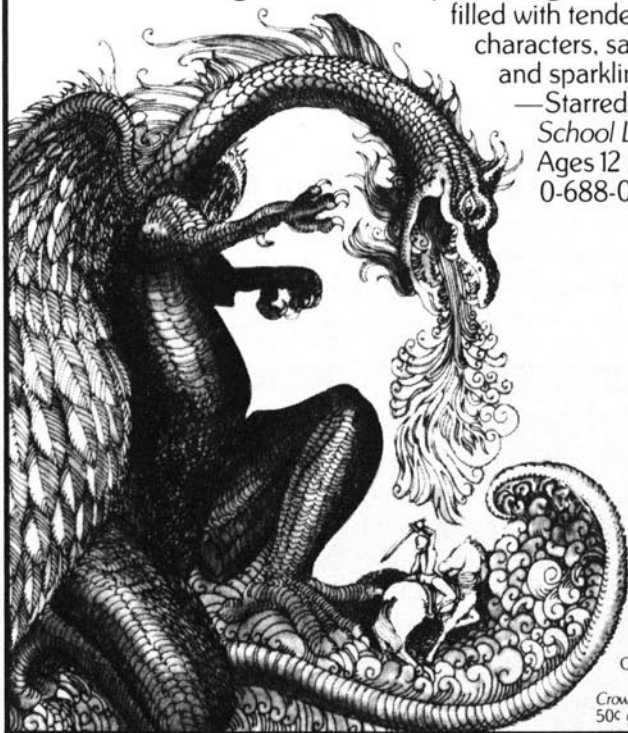
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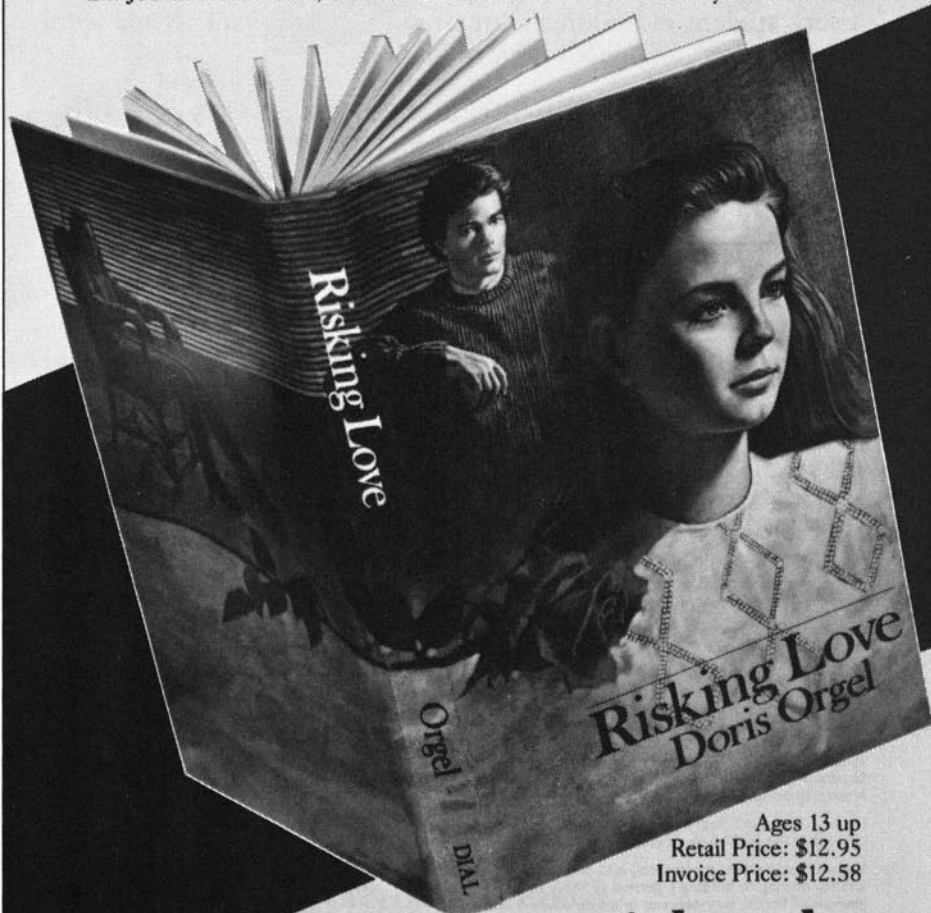
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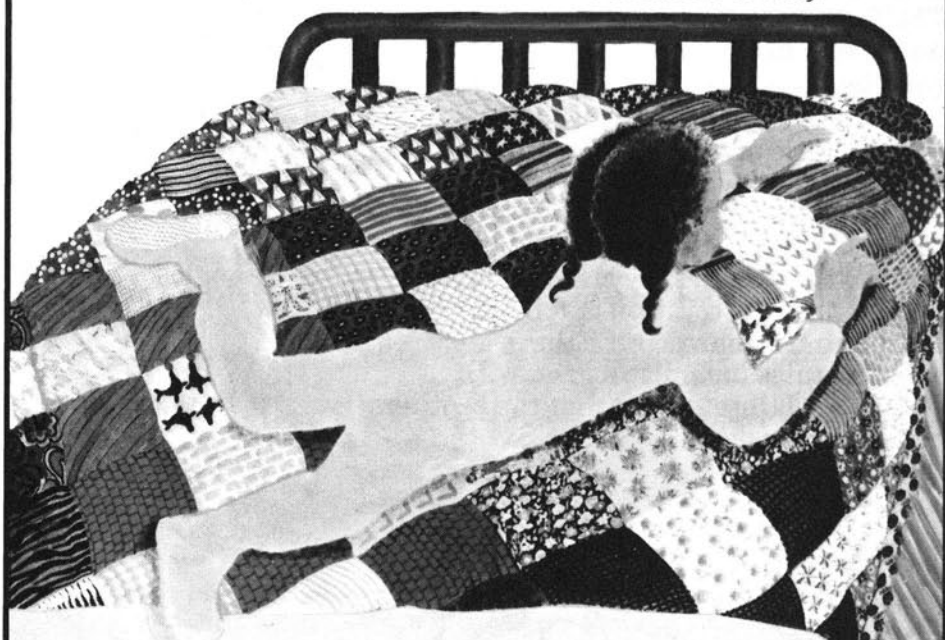
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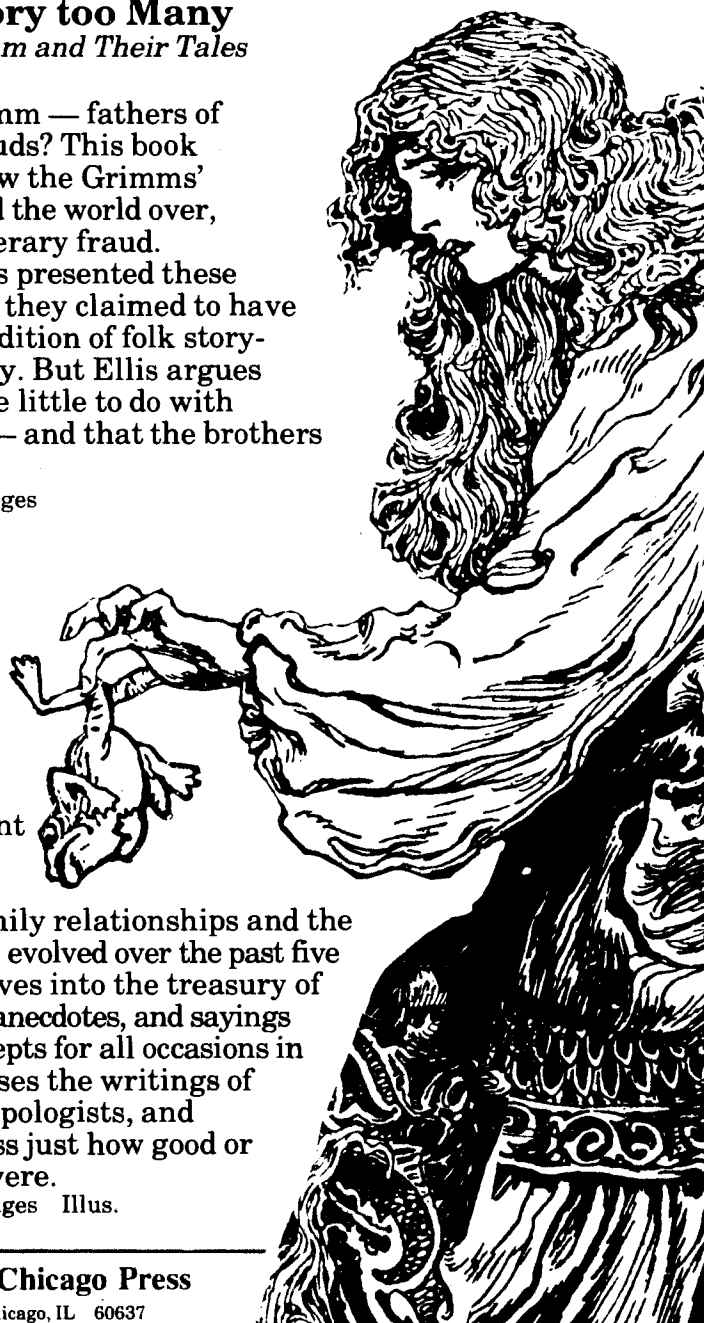
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